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Senate

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise because we have passed the 13th conference report on the 13 appropriations bills.

As we prepare to return to our home States, everyone here in the Chamber and everyone in the Senate can find some aspect of the conference report on Defense to which to object.

In the end, what we have to do is consider the work as a whole--as a complete body of work--and make our judgments on it as not any one single item or issue but the whole notion of how we protect our Nation's interests across the globe. On that, this measure deserves my support, and has gotten my support, and obviously the support of a majority of our colleagues.

As we dispose of the conference report on the Defense appropriations bill, I regret that we leave behind other issues involving security for our country at home. I want to mention those today.

I hope before we adjourn at the end of this day, we will have had the opportunity to bring to this floor several measures that will be brought up by unanimous consent, and I hope with no objection. One of those deals with the security of our ports. As it turns out, for the hundreds of ports across and around our Nation where ships travel in and out of them every single week, the security we provide for those ports and for the people who live in the areas around those ports is inadequate.

The opportunity for someone to bring terrorist devices into our ports and into heavily populated areas possibly is very real. It is one that we currently do not address well, and we need to.

The Senate Commerce Committee, under the leadership of Senator Hollings, has reported out legislation, I believe unanimously, on port security. It needs to come before this body and to be considered before we ultimately adjourn.

Secondly, on the issue of airport security, aircraft security has been debated and I think satisfactorily addressed by the House and Senate and by the President.

Many people in this part of the country, and around the country, travel by railroad. We leave undone, at least at this moment, issues that ought to be addressed with respect to rail security, the security of people who are traveling on railroads as passengers around our Nation.

Again, the Commerce Committee, under the leadership of Senator Hollings, has reported out, I believe unanimously, legislation dealing with rail security. It is an important issue, and not just for those of us in the Northeast corridor; it is an important issue for our Nation. And we know, as the Presiding Officer does, there are hundreds of thousands of people who travel literally every day through tunnels that go in and out of New York, under Baltimore, and under this city that are not too secure, are not well

ventilated or well lit, and are not well protected.

This measure would help to address that, along with better surveillance of our bridges, providing better and more adequate security aboard our trains. My hope is that before we leave this day, before the Senate sets this day, we will have taken up this measure by unanimous consent and approve it in the Senate.

There was objection a few moments ago to another unanimous consent request which was made with respect to antiterrorism reinsurance. Other nations around the globe have been the target of terrorist attacks, and damage has been suffered from those attacks for many years. For us, fortunately, the experience of September 11 had never visited this country before. We have not had to trouble ourselves with determining how we provide adequately for insurance in the event of a terrorist attack.

Other countries deal with this differently. In Israel and the United Kingdom, which have had terrorist attacks for many years, those countries have their own approach. In Israel, for example, the country provides the insurance for the terrorist attacks. The Banking Committee and the Commerce Committee both have sought to craft legislation to say there ought to be a backstop with respect to antiterrorism legislation, that initially the insurance companies themselves should put up money and absorb the losses, to the tune of \$10 or \$15 billion, but after that there should be a sharing of the costs that grow out of terrorist attacks. The Federal Government should share that. It is unfortunate we were not able to proceed with this legislation today, and it is imperative we take it up as soon as we return.

The last point is with respect to other unfinished business. When terrorists attacked us on September 11, they didn't just

take people's lives in New York, the Pentagon, and in Pennsylvania; they struck a body blow to our economy. We are still reeling, to some extent, from that body blow. The work of the Federal Reserve on monetary policy helps us with respect to that body blow.

The fact that energy prices have fallen so much helps us with respect to that body blow. The fact that we are spending, frankly, a lot of money with deficit spending, in order to fight terrorism here and across the country and around the world, provides stimulus to the economy and helps to reduce the length of time under which we will likely have a recession.

There is one other thing we could have done, and ought to have done, besides the terrorism reinsurance proposal that has been objected to, and that was to pass an economic recovery plan. That, I think, had broad bipartisan support by Democrats and Republicans. It would have accelerated depreciation and gotten businesses back into the business of making capital investment. It would have provided a payroll tax holiday for businesses and employees as well. It would have provided extensions of unemployment insurance and helped folks on the health insurance side. It would have helped States that are reeling at this point in time. Unfortunately, we have not had the opportunity to debate that today and to pass a true bipartisan plan.

So we go home with half a loaf. We go home with half a loaf, but, as the Presiding Officer knows, we will come back next month. And as we come back next month, my hope is, if we have not dealt satisfactorily with railroad security and port security today, if we have not dealt with antiterrorism reinsurance today, as it appears we will not, that once we return we will take that up.